

REMARKS

Claims 2-11, 13-23 and 25-32 are pending in this application. Applicant appreciates the Office Action's indication that claims 17-23 and 25 are allowed, and claims 2-8, 10, 11 and 13-16 contain allowable subject matter.

By this Amendment, allowable dependent claims 2, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16 are rewritten into independent form. Rejected claims 1, 12 and 24 are canceled.

New claims 26-32 are added to recite "an image forming apparatus" that includes the allowable subject matter of the "thermal fixing device" in claims 2, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, and 16, respectively.

Claim 9 is amended to obviate informalities, as the Examiner requested.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the specification. The title and the specification are amended, as the Examiner requested. No new matter is added.

The Examiner suggested that the portion of the specification at page 53, line 16 - page 71, line 12 could be deleted. While Applicant greatly appreciates the Examiner's helpful advice, Applicant believes that it is beneficial to keep this portion in the specification to ensure complete disclosure. Thus, Applicant chooses not to delete this portion from the specification.

In view of the above, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 9 is amended to obviate informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is respectfully requested.

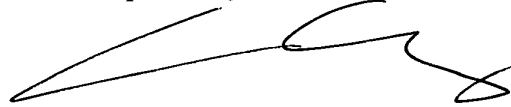
The Office Action rejects claims 1, 12 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Kaneko et al. This rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1, 12 and 24.

Claims 26-32 are patentable because they recite the allowable subject matter recited in claims 2, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16, respectively.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 2-11, 13-23 and 25-32 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:GXL/gck

Attachment:

Amendment Transmittal
Substitute Specification (Marked-Up and Clean Copy)

Date: April 7, 2006

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--